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ABSTRACT

Three professors of education examine constructively the kinds of environments, relationships, concepts of content and curriculums, evaluations, and settings for learning that the struggle for humane educational change requires. They propose an alternative model of education that emphasizes values and processes consistent with a commitment to an explicit humanistic ethical concept. The authors contend that learning is the exploring, integrating, and transcending of the immediate experience. Therefore, the learning environment should provide a wide range of options for students and teachers alike; opportunities for action and direct participation by students and teachers at all levels of decisionmaking; and for radically different, individually defined, emerging directions. The schooling model offered here as an alternative to the behavioral objectives model is rooted in explicit value choices and in consistently derived interpretations of the present cultural milieu. (Author/HLP)

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RESCHOOLING SOCIETY: A Conceptual Model

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Foreword by
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EA 005 351

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FOREWORD

FOR AT LEAST five decades there has been a fundamental, widening split in the ranks of persons concerned with U.S. education; a split that has profoundly affected trends in both theory and practice. The schism first became apparent in the 1920's when the so-called Scientific Movement in education began to emphasize content, minimum essentials, and a reliance on normative type tests. From the beginning, this testing movement (as it was sometimes called) came into direct conflict with the more humanistic ideas which were embodied in the tenets of the Progressive Education Association.

Whatever labels have been applied to the opposing factions over the years, one may somewhat simplistically characterize them by saying that one group emphasized a command of selected responses and a mastery of predetermined content as a goal for schooling. The other group saw a need for education to place greater stress on human development, self-realization, and social reconstruction as desirable ends. In fairness, one must recognize that each ideological camp sometimes presented the *worst* features of their opponents' ideas as *typical* of their proposals for educational change!

Particularly since the early 1960's there have been a number of educators who have advocated a narrow concept of educational objectives and practices which involve "efficient" school programs based on behavioral objectives, performance contracts, or competency-based instruction. These ideas have come into direct ideological conflict with humanistic-ethical concepts which seek to support a human needs curriculum from early childhood

through the later years of post-secondary education.

In *Reschooling Society: A Conceptual Model*, James B. Macdonald, Bernice J. Wolfson, and Esther Zaret have pooled their substantial talents to examine constructively the kinds of environments, relationships, concepts of content and curricula, evaluations, and settings for learning that the struggle for humane educational change requires. They make a strong case for their position.

Inevitably, readers will respond differently and vehemently to the provocative models with which this monograph concludes. I suspect that there will be a considerable replay of prejudices of various kinds and perhaps even a tendency to choose sides for Armageddon as the ideas for alternatives to present dimensions of schooling, learning, and evaluation soak in. If so, so much the better. The times are ripe for important decisions lest our schools become irrevocably linked together by chains made of the punch cards to which an unwise use of programming and behavioral objectives could lead.

The thoughtful, temperate, and carefully measured approach taken in *Reschooling Society* motivates me to recommend it warmly to all who are seriously interested in our alternative educational futures. The decisions we must make by the mid-1980's with respect to society and its educational components require the kind of input that Professors Macdonald, Wolfson, and Zaret have striven successfully to provide.

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RESCHOOLING SOCIETY: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL*

THE PURPOSE of this monograph is to present an alternative to the currently dominant model of schooling, a model we reject as oppressive to human beings, both students and teachers. The emphases of the present system—on production of narrow predetermined ends, on efficiency as a primary value criterion, and on objectives predetermined by curriculum experts, written guides, and/or teachers—all combine into a design which is totally unsatisfactory. We favor a model which emphasizes values and processes that are consistent with a commitment to an explicit humanistic ethical concept. This commitment is in irreconcilable opposition to the current technical-production focus of schooling.

We recognize that any model of schooling must concern itself with certain elements or variables. These are necessary to the very existence of schooling as a formal social institution. Thus a conception of schooling must project *goals* or *purposes* which are its social justification for existence; it must have some *pattern of organization;* it must have some *notion of desired relationships* among and between persons and things; and it must have some idea of *how to assess* the status of its activities.

These fundamental variables are analogous to individual human activity, which may also be said to be goal directed with concomitant feedback from the environment; to have pattern and orderliness (that is, personal meaning and significance); and to be created

*We wish to thank Charity James for the idea for our title, "reschooling society."

in the transactions of selves, other people, and things.

Recognition of these fundamental concerns has been explicitly stated in educational literature for many years. The most prevailing model for thinking about schooling is the Tyler rationale.[1] The crux of this position is captured in the four questions identified by Tyler as basic for decisions about schooling. These are:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

To answer these questions, Mager, Popham, and others have proposed that all goals should be stated in behavioral terms.[2] Once goals are stated in this manner, alternative activities can be scanned and a selection made of those activities expected to elicit the desired behavioral objectives. Decisions of organization (scope and sequence) follow. Finally, evaluation is carried out. This recommended sequence is a highly technical procedure which, when carried to its logical conclusion, provides a preplanned program of behavioral objectives closely tied to subsequent evaluation.

In recent years some educators (including the authors) have become increasingly disen-

[1] Ralph W. Tyler. *Principles of Curriculum and Instruction.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950.

[2] See, for example: R. F. Mager. *Preparing Objectives for Programmed Instruction.* Palo Alto, California: Fearon Publishers, Inc., 1962; and W. J. Popham. "Objectives and Instruction." *Instructional Objectives.* AERA Monograph Series on Curriculum and Evaluation, No. 3. Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1969.

chanted with the rationale of behavioral objectives. There are many reasons for this disenchantment[3]—for example, its failure to come to grips with the problem of values in a fundamental manner, and its violation of what we believe is the essential nature of learning and developmental processes.

It is our intention to describe an open-ended model for thinking about schooling based on a humanistic ethical commitment which we will make explicit. When we first started to develop our model, we thought we would use Tyler's framework of questions about schooling in order to maintain historical continuity. We thought it would be possible to ask Tyler's questions and, using our value base, to arrive at different answers. However, we soon discovered that *we had really raised a different set of highly interrelated questions encompassing broader sociocultural issues.*

In rejecting the implicit value position of the behavioral objectives approach (technical control) and explicating instead a humanistic-liberating stance, we found we had to deal with a different level of concerns. In addition to asking "What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?" we asked: What are our value commitments, and what is our view of the nature of man?

[3] See: James B. Macdonald and Bernice J. Wolfson. "A Case Against Behavioral Objectives." *The Elementary School Journal* 71 (3): 119-27; December 1970. Also: Herbert M. Kliebard. "The Tyler Rationale." *School Review* 78 (2): 259-72; February 1970; Donald Arnstine. "The Language and Values of Programmed Instruction." *Educational Forum* 28: 337-46; January-March 1964; William E. Doll, Jr. "A Methodology of Experience: An Alternative to Behavioral Objectives." Paper presented at AERA annual meeting, February 1971. 33 pp. Mimeographed; Arthur W. Combs. *Educational Accountability: Beyond Behavioral Objectives.* Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1972. 40 pp.

In searching for our direction, we asked: What are the sociocultural forces now operating in our society that we would choose to maximize or perpetuate?

We also sought to clarify our psychological position: What are our conceptions of learning? What is the nature of human experience in general, and how is it related to learning?

Events, in school and out, occur in specific contexts, planned or unplanned. What would happen in our model of schooling? What do we mean by instruction? The transactions that we would plan for in our model of schooling are derived from our philosophical and psychological position and our interpretation of "teaching" within this framework. (Charts outlining our position can be found in the appendices.)

The model that emerges from these choices is a clear alternative to the behavioral objectives model which for too long has dominated our thinking about schooling. Our model of schooling is rooted in explicit value choices and in consistently derived interpretations of the present cultural milieu. Reschooling society demands attention to the sociophilosophical assumptions of schooling; these considerations require a model that expands the dimensions of schooling.

SOCIOCULTURAL DIMENSIONS

WE BEGIN with the need to choose those sociocultural forces now operating in our society that we desire to maximize or perpetuate. It is precisely at the point of making these choices that the educational value gauntlet is thrown down. Education is a moral enterprise. This means that questions answered and decisions made in education are mostly

"should" questions and decisions rather than descriptive "is" questions and decisions. We tend to prescribe activity according to our assessment of its worth as compared to other possible activities. Our decisions reflect value commitments and ethical choices. Thus education is not only *not* value free, it is (along with politics) the most value laden of human activities. The important questions, therefore, are in what directions are we headed, *and* in what directions should we be headed. We answered the "should" question by choosing Gibson Winter's [4] statement of the fundamental concepts necessary today for intelligent social decision making:

- Liberation
- Pluralism
- Participation

As we look at the present world about us, at our growing consciousness of the nature of prejudice, injustice, domination, and violence, we see a commonality among the struggles of the third world of have-not nations, our own Black, Indian, and Spanish-speaking minorities, our women's liberation groups, and various counterculture groups. As Winter suggests, the desires for liberation, participation, and acceptance of cultural pluralism are basic thrusts common to all groups struggling to emerge as equal sharers in human society. We interpret these thrusts as significant value directions, and we find them to be far more satisfying as a guide for establishing educational directions than is the usual preoccupation with predetermined ends. Winter's concepts suggest to us the following guidelines for developing an alternative model of schooling.

Liberation. The purpose of schooling

[4] Gibson Winter. *Being Free.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970.

should be to encourage the continuing development of each individual's potential (teacher and student) through both the liberating encounter with the totality of history and culture and the ongoing process of choosing and directing one's own activity. (Compare this goal with that of the more prevalent technical model: achieving skills and knowledge determined in advance, by the teacher or some other authority, with emphasis upon efficiency and effectiveness as primary values.) *We propose that schooling be liberating in contrast to controlling; that the basic goal be the development of autonomous, valuing human beings, not the development of role-oriented skills.*

Pluralism. No subject matter, organization, or methodology is appropriate for all (or even perhaps for any two individuals) at any given time. We accept, and must implement in curricular terms, the concept of personalization as the keynote for pluralistic curricula, with the explicit understanding that no two students will or should explore an identical curriculum during their school experience. (Contrast this conception with the standardization of process and content found in the technical model. Although allowances may be made in the technical model for different rates of learning, the individual choice of goals is seldom permitted, and the means of achieving the determined goals are usually prescribed.) The need to accept cultural differences in society must be broadened to include the acceptance of differences in cultural learnings in school on the part of individuals. *We propose that schooling be personalized, in contrast to standardized; that schools reflect and cherish pluralistic life styles and cultures.*

Participation. All persons who must live with decisions should have a significant voice

in the making of those decisions. This is a commitment to human rights. Thus parents, students, and staff members are to participate fully in decisions about schooling. Power must be shared and available to all through a system of participation at significant levels of decision making. (This approach is, of course, in direct contrast to the hierarchical process of decision making which generally pervades our schools.) *We propose that decision making in schooling be participatory rather than dominated by authority; that students, parents, and teachers share in all decisions which affect them.*

Given these value directives, let us turn our attention to the psychological and transactional dimensions of our model.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS

OUR PRIMARY concern in this area was to identify and synthesize related currents of contemporary thought which rest on a humanistic conception of man. Both humanistic psychology and humanistic-existential philosophy have ethical assumptions consistent with the sociocultural thrust for participation, liberation, and pluralism. From these two sources we have developed a set of significant ideas as a guide in deriving a consistent psychological model of learning and schooling. Each of the following statements is a crucial facet of the total psychological framework. Each statement is also an ethical commitment to action.

- A humanistic-existential conception of man is that of a dynamic and active organism functioning holistically in a transactional relationship with his environment.

- Man experiences holistically; his physiological, intellectual, social, and emotional de-

velopment[5] occurs and is experienced totally rather than discretely.

Although researchers separate these aspects of man for measurement and study, we should recognize that such findings may not give us any insight into the holistic functioning and experiencing of human beings. Analogously, studying the human heart on the dissecting table gives us limited information about its functioning in the living system.

- "Learning" emerges in the flow and continuity of man's total experiencing and growing; growth is not a static process, nor can there be static outcomes of "learning."

- In a healthy, fully functioning person, experiencing—being—learning *is* a totality that is dichotomized into this and that only after the fact.

The notions of affective versus cognitive domains, and preconscious versus conscious experiencing, are irrelevant and misleading concepts when we are dealing with the living process.

- The process of development is, by definition, personal, unique, and not standardized.

- ". . . Thinking is something that cannot be taught. Under ideal circumstances, memory and thinking are carried on neither consciously nor unconsciously but in the preconscious stream of automatic mentation, which proceeds at phenomenal speed. Of this swift stream, conscious processes provide us with tentative summaries and fragmentary samples. For this, there is abundant clinical and experimental evidence, the crucial implications of which have been largely neglected by education. What we need is to learn how to avoid inter-

[5] When we refer to man's development throughout our discussion, we mean all these various aspects in interrelationships, in a whole system.

fering with this inherent preconscious capacity of the human mind."[6]

- Man's commitments and his reality are expressed in action; man has the freedom and responsibility for defining and creating himself through the choices he makes.

- Man creates and defines his uniqueness through the quality of his existence.

This concept implies that the *quality* of the educational environment and the *process* of experiencing must supersede questions of quantity and end products of behavior.

- The paradox of responsibility and freedom that is inherent in any situation is compounded in an educational situation. No matter how openly structured or free it may be, the educational institution is inevitably influencing or creating the situational limits of the learners' choices.[7]

- Ultimately, the educational establishment must deal with the responsibility-freedom paradox of education through the kinds of educational environments provided. Educational environments can be structured to face up to the inherent educational paradox by promoting awareness, commitment, and flexible choices of action for both teachers and students. Typically, however, educational environments are structured to turn defensively away from the paradox by providing a series of predetermined and prescribed teaching and learning roles.[8]

[6] Lawrence S. Kubie. "Research on Protecting Preconscious Functions in Education." Paper presented at Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development meeting, Washington, D.C., 1961.

[7] Hazel E. Barnes. *An Existentialist Ethic.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1967. pp. 289-90.

[8] Esther Zaret. "Differentiating Teaching Behavior from a Humanist Existential Perspective." Unpublished dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1967.

We have used these ideas in two ways: first, to develop a model of learning that is humanistic, existential, and personal; and second, to identify the kinds of educational activities and experiences that will support the humanistic conception of human development.

The humanistic-existential personal model of learning

The model of learning which we are proposing is a derived model. It leans most heavily on recent writings of humanistic psychologists (Rogers, Allport, Maslow, Combs, and Snygg). However, in the spirit of pluralism, participation, and liberation, we have attempted our own synthesis to illustrate and emphasize our own conceptions and commitments.

The substance of the proposed model is an ongoing flow of experiencing involving three interacting facets: *exploring, integrating,* and *transcending* the immediate experience; then further cycles of exploring, integrating, and transcending from new levels of consciousness. These aspects of learning are *not* seen as discrete stages in a hierarchy; there is a continuing back and forth flow from one facet to another. At a given time, one or more may be occurring. The three facets, in interaction, comprise a highly individualized process of creating personal meanings through acting upon and transforming tentative patterns of "knowing" into personal knowledge.

Exploring is the swift flow of processing of all that the individual is experiencing. Experiencing and interacting with sensed data involve both preconscious and conscious modes of processing. The content of the flow of experiencing is both rational and nonrational data. Some small fraction of this processing and reorganization may be expressed in ob-

servable patterns of behavior as symbolic (cognitive) knowing. But this conscious, verifiable component has been described by Kubie as "only a weighted and fragmentary sample of the continuous stream of preconscious processing of data." Our model conceives of this preliminary processing as an initial, exploring facet in which the individual interacts freely and intuitively with all the exciting data of a rich environment.

Exploring requires time and opportunities for mucking about, messing around, getting into things, trying out, feeling, fantasizing, probing, and sensing. The processes of "exploring" are internally experienced: they cannot be defined externally; they cannot be provided *for* a student; and they are not necessarily apparent to an observer. In other words, while I am touching, dreaming, tasting, thinking, or feeling, *you* may see me as idling or goofing off. Whitehead's conception of "The Romance Stage" in learning captures the tentativeness and joy that mark the individual's expanding awareness of the world.

Integrating is the preliminary structuring of some of the data being processed by the individual. The integrating of presymbolic and symbolic data may be expressed in tentative patterns of intellectual and personal relationships: feelings, attitudes, values, perceptions, information, skills, and performance. Though verifiable by others, these patternings are tentative and preliminary closures; they are not yet fully integrated by the individual. The continuing process of patterning and integrating involves time and opportunities for sorting out one's tentative "knowing": for restructuring patterns, filling in holes, reconciling sensed differences, and resolving paradoxes.

Transcending is insightful knowing—the creating of personal meanings by an individual

as he acts on, tests out, and transcends his tentative understandings of personal and intellectual relationships. This is a crucial aspect of the learning process. It can be a painful and lonely struggle to resolve conflicts in understandings, to make personal commitments, to clarify purposes, to acknowledge desires and fantasies, to risk failure by acting on tentative insights. It can also be a rich and rewarding process. The heightened sense of experiencing, the expanding awareness of what is and what can be are expressed in openness to further experiencing, further learning, further awareness of problems, further conflict and struggle, further disappointments and satisfaction, and a special joy in having acted on one's understandings and commitments. Thus the continuing integration of intellectual and insightful levels of knowing is expressed by the individual in higher levels of self-esteem, commitment, responsibility, freedom, and an ever-expanding awareness of the world he lives in.

Implications of this model

The three facets of the model—exploring, integrating, and transcending—are dynamic interactive processes; they may be occurring simultaneously or they may be occurring in cycles of varying dominance and emphasis, but the full cycle of the learning process encompasses each aspect to some degree. The circularity of the model expresses the inherent unity of the conceptualized process. Initial awareness is transcended through the student's activity in testing out the validity and appropriateness of his tentative patterns of knowing. Action is crucial to every aspect of the learning cycle. Acting on his knowing in a challenging, confronting, clarifying, yet accepting environment helps to focus the student's development

and bring him to an expanded awareness. Transcending tentative knowing permits the individual to be more open to his environment.

It is likely that developing an expanded and refined awareness may precede the student's ability to symbolize and communicate his understandings to others. Yet he may attempt some incomplete communication of personal meanings that will be perceived in different ways depending on the receptivity—the responsiveness—of the environment, particularly the teacher. Educational environments, then, must be explicitly designed to legitimate, value, and nurture all facets of the learning process.

In practice, however, our schools ignore the *exploring* facet, exploit the *integrating* facet, and work in opposition to the *transcending* facet. Most school emphasis is in the general area of the *integrating* aspect, comprising presymbolic and symbolic patterning—a tentative kind of knowing. Although these tentative patternings of intellectual and personal relationships may be communicated and verified by others, the individual is still experiencing only tentative and intellectualized "knowing."

In our schools today *integrating* (tentative knowing) is treated as an end product, forever being subjected to testing, measuring, evaluating, assessing, researching, etc. This pressure for premature structuring—such as asking for answers to controlling questions, imposing predetermined stimuli, and demanding that students work toward ends specified externally—can short-circuit the entire learning process. Furthermore, if the student *feels* threatened in the learning situation, he may himself effect premature closure, aborting the breadth of the full learning process. The environment can thus limit rather than extend the students' opportunities to learn.

Developing a learning environment

We see the desirable school as a structured learning environment that can support the full range of the learning process. The question we want to ask is: How can learning environments be structured to be rich in opportunities for exploring, nurturing of supportive relationships, and at the same time enhance an individual's efforts to transcend his experiences and create personal meanings? What will be important in such an environment is not just the availability of certain kinds of experiences, but a consistent approach in conception, organization, and evaluation that views experiences themselves as educationally valid rather than as a means to predetermined ends.

Our own emphasis is on the conditions and the *quality* of the environment in which experiences develop, rather than on preselection of learning activities to yield prespecified end products. In our view, educative experiences emerge in the dialectic of free interplay between the responding student, other persons, and a purposefully structured learning environment. Such an environment includes varied and provocative opportunities to interact with people, things, places, and ideas. The interplay of individual and environment is a reciprocal and emerging process. Teachers, too, are considered to be continuing and involved "students."

In this conception, educative experiences cannot be prescribed nor even prestated. However, criteria can be provided for selecting and organizing a *range* of activities and experiences that will support and promote the full range of the learning process as we have described it. These criteria are derived from our prestated ethical commitment to support the emerging counterthrust for a more humanistic society by

implementing the humanistic-existential conception of man's development.

In general, we would demand the satisfaction of one global criterion for every educational experience, activity, or interpersonal relationship: *Does it promote, value, and support authentic personal responses by both teacher and student to the reality of the ongoing experience?* If yes, the experience is potentially open (or "opening"), permitting the individual to explore, validate, and/or modify his developing conceptions of realities and relationships in the real world of the "school."

More specifically: to meet the criterion of pluralism, the learning environment must provide a wide range of options[9] for students and teachers alike, including opportunities for varied and highly individual patterns of experiencing and functioning; to meet the criterion of participation, the learning environment must provide opportunities for action and direct participation by students and teachers at all levels of decision making; to meet the criterion of liberation, the learning environment must provide for radically different, individually defined, emerging directions rather than predetermined ends for both students and teachers. And most important, we must (and we can) provide a school environment which nourishes the quality and intent of the reconceptualized learning process.

TRANSACTIONAL DIMENSIONS

THE CONCEPT of transaction is basic to our view of what transpires in our model of school-

[9] Options in any society are necessarily limited. We believe that the value commitments of *this model* should provide guidance for defining limits in a given context. (There are, of course, other models.)

ing. Transaction refers to the dynamic interrelations between persons, between a person and ideas, and between a person and things in any specific context. In an educational setting the entry point for a transaction lies in the experiences children are having in school. Experiences emerge in the free interplay between a person and a purposefully structured educational environment. Educational activities create experiences (which are by definition personal) and are in themselves validly educative rather than a means to predetermined educational goals.

Purposes arise out of the transaction of the subjective and objective conditions of experience. A purpose which arises out of a transaction could come to resemble what may be called an objective, though not necessarily so. In contrast, predefined objectives are projected into situations and used as bases for shaping the roles of individuals in relation to things, ideas, and other people. Such an objective is exactly what it says: it stands out from the subject and has no necessary relationship to any subject in a specific situation. Purposes, however, arise from a subject who, it is implied, intentionally seeks some direction or end. Purposes by this definition cannot arise outside the situation and, therefore, cannot be predetermined.

Our model is transaction-oriented in requiring that programs and curricula and people be flexible enough to allow for personal responses to the reality of the ongoing experiences. Traditional schools are role-oriented and experiences are monitored by plans, ideas, rules, etc., that are projected into the situation but do not arise out of the situation.

It should be made clear that the concept proposed here is in no way related to an unplanned curriculum. The very concept of

transaction means action arising through the relationship of inner subjective qualities of persons with outer cultural realities within some social context, a context that has a past history and a future orientation. These transactions require the continuous examination of values and commitments by each person involved in the process.

Planning, in the alternative model, is viewed in terms of the dynamic potential inherent in students in a given environment. It is the structuring of a living situation with a wide range of educative alternatives. The transactions that take place within this structure cannot be planned in the traditional manner. They are more in the nature of "planned accidents" and have somewhat the quality of a "happening" to them. The curriculum *is* the cultural environment which has been *selected* as a set of possibilities for learning transactions.

In summary, we are proposing a model of a school in our culture for our time which would embody and support the increasing thrust for liberation, participation, and pluralism for all participants. To bring such a school into being we have to make decisions about various interrelated aspects of a holistic design. The following decisions are those we believe necessary to enhance the major direction we have already reviewed.

The learning environment

Our emphasis is on the conditions and the quality of the environment in which experiences develop rather than on preselection of learning activities to yield prespecified end products. A humanistic educational environment must provide:

- Real options for teachers and students alike. "Real options" means having choices,

making decisions, and taking responsibility for the consequences of one's own activity.

- Varied opportunities for each student to explore the environment in his own individual way.

- Opportunities for each teacher, too, to explore different ways of interacting as person and teacher; to experience himself as a growing person; to test and affirm his purposes and commitments; to assume responsibility for making professional decisions consistent with his ethical commitments.

- Opportunities for each individual to continue his "romance" with ideas, things, people, and places though others in his environment may no longer be interested.

- Opportunities and services available to both teacher and student for consulting, interacting with others, challenging, sharing, confronting, accepting, clarifying, and caring as each begins to integrate patterns of relationships as "tentative knowing."

- Suspension of predetermined and/or societal criteria of judgment as the individual begins to sort out, restructure, fill in holes, reconcile sensed differences, and resolve paradoxes in his expanding awareness of his environment.

- Active, responsive support for student and teacher as each struggles to define and act on his evolving insights and generalizations in moving to higher levels of awareness. Moving in the direction of a higher level of awareness implies opportunities for the individual to develop and test out his evolving sense of purpose and commitment, to express his desires and fantasies, to attempt continuously to discriminate and synthesize.

- Opportunities for each teacher and student to assume responsibility for evaluating his

own purposes and setting new goals at any time, with or without consultation.

- Participation by the teacher as a supportive facilitating resource person. That is, the teacher must have the personal and professional skills to respond sensitively to various individuals in a variety of flexible ways instead of on the basis of predetermined teacher-student roles. This implies that the teacher is himself a continuing learner, constantly clarifying and expanding his own personal-professional values, commitments, resources, and skills.

- Activities, and opportunities for interpersonal relationships, that are "educational," open, and self-renewing. This means that whether an activity is dropped or continued by an individual, the experience will have brought him to an awareness of limitations or further possibilities in the activity he is currently involved in. In the view projected here, educational experiences cannot be predetermined, prestated, nor "provided" for any student. We can, however, provide learning environments offering a rich range of opportunities for the interplay of students with other people, things, places, and ideas.

The teacher-student relationship

The crucial element of the projected learning environment is a relationship of mutual respect and trust shared by teacher and students. In any school the teacher serves as a model. He is looked to for intellectual leadership and attitudes about human beings and our culture. In our view, the teacher must be an active, caring, and responsible adult demonstrating respect for our pluralistic cultural heritage. The intellectually able teacher will communicate his excitement and joy in learning to his students. He is able to take a stand,

communicate a position, and permit the students to develop and validate their own points of view.

The teacher responds to students on a personal level, as a real person rather than as someone playing the role of teacher. The most critical aspects of the teacher's successful functioning in this model are the kinds of personal relationships he establishes, his attitude toward intellectual and creative activities, and his ability to deal constructively with the realities of the teaching/learning situation.

The teacher, in this model, may be characterized as an aware decision maker, with the immediate responsibility for structuring and being part of a responsive and evocative educational environment. As a major agent of influence in the learning environment, the teacher communicates flexible expectations to the students. The teacher is continually guided by an acute awareness of himself as person-teacher-decision maker, a responsive attentiveness to the students as persons, and a thorough understanding of alternatives available in any instructional context. The teacher does *not* function as the authority or the final source of knowledge and decision making. Instead, the teacher, too, is a continuing student, constantly clarifying and expanding his own personal-professional values, commitments, resources, and skills.

The content of learning

All cultural content can be viewed as a start or stimulation for individual exploration and development. Substantive goals will emerge from individual interactions with and processing of data in the environment.

Traditional emphasis on the so-called "basic skills" for making it in our society (reading, writing, arithmetic) implies that these skills

can be separated out both from the larger cultural context in which they are to become operative and from the personal-holistic context of human development. In practice, basic skills have become the primary objectives of schooling in our society. Such a skewed emphasis assumes that if these skills are not taught directly, systematically, intensively, and extensively, either they will not be learned at all or there will be widespread inability to read, compute, and write.

However viewed, the prevailing approach has not been meeting its aims. Volumes of current critiques on the status of education attest to its failure. Yet the fragmented focus on isolated "learning of skills" is continued in new waves of intensive "teaching" that can only be terrorizing to young children and self-defeating in the long run. This fragmented approach exemplifies the fragmented conceptions of men and schooling shaping our schools today.

The nature of the intellectual aspect of human development is a crucial concern of our model. Our focus, however, is holistic, reflecting our holistic conceptions and commitments. We believe that skills, both intellectual and social, are inextricably enmeshed in the cultural milieu and will be continuously developed by the student as he learns to deal with ideas and decisions within the broad context of his environment.

In this view the task of education is threefold:

- To stimulate students' awareness
- To respond to students' growing awareness with help, suggestions, and resources, as appropriate
- To initiate suggestions and opportunities designed to stimulate and support students' learning in areas they have selected.

The meaning of "curriculum"

As Dewey once remarked, the curriculum is a contrived environment. In our view, "curriculum" is the cultural environment which has been purposefully selected as a set of possibilities for facilitating educative transactions.

The realities of the cultural milieux in a pluralistic society (see Appendix A) are seen as the content which will facilitate the transcendent and liberating experiences of each individual. Each individual will participate in the selection of relevant content, and each individual's "curriculum" will be unique. However, a basic resource framework is necessary for looking at the kinds of cultural data available, the major cultural avenues for processing these data, and the basic human ways of acting with data. This framework would include, for example, such material as our present conceptions of political, social, economic, psychological, and physical structures. Further, it would include awareness of and experience with those metaphysical, aesthetic, and technological rationalities and forms of expression that are unique to subcultures as well as those of the dominant culture of our society. These data sources and fundamental ways of processing would further be tapped in relation to such social needs and processes as communication, work, and leisure activity.

All these data, processes, and social uses are fundamentally of importance for human action. The curriculum as environment then would encompass (a) political and social actions (social and cultural maintenance and change); (b) personal actions (moral and ethical choices); and (c) cultural actions (creation of new cultural meanings).

Curriculum in our alternative model is necessarily viewed in general process and content forms. Decisions about curriculum are

determinations of directional goals which provide the necessary boundaries for becoming immersed in our culture. These curriculum decisions will be expected to foster and reflect the fundamental social and cultural values we hold to be essential for humane development. What kinds of decisions need to be made and who will make them? For clarity and contrast we will present our views within the historic framework of organization, structure, and syntax.

Organization. The problem of organization is in many ways a question of how we are to "package" the environment. This is not as commercial or crass as it sounds because, as noted earlier, the environment will be there anyway and the real question is: In what manner will persons and social conditions intervene to shape this environment?

The traditional approach has been to begin with an analysis of the knowledge and skills necessary for persons to function adequately, then break these down into manageable time units and adjust the specifics to the general capabilities of students at various age levels in our culture. The subject matter is preformed in terms of the adult-organized bodies of knowledge and skills which are considered necessary for learning within these disciplines. It is precisely this approach which structures a closed school.

In contrast, we believe that the curriculum should be organized according to selected areas of investigation. These areas may take many forms and would probably be located geographically in many places in and out of the "school." The essential ingredient, whatever form curriculum takes, is that it be embodied in areas that lend themselves to student interest and social investigation. "School" may well take the form of in- and out-of-

school *interest centers* developed around common concerns of our culture (such as mathematics, physical science, technology, business, social studies, language, and arts). More appropriately, in our view, curriculum can be conceptualized in terms of interdisciplinary areas of investigation which coalesce a number of cultural concerns under one thematic idea (for example, Communication, World of Work, Culture, Pollution, Systems, or Poverty). Students will have opportunities to initiate and choose specific areas of investigation.

Structure. In thinking about structure, or sequence which flows from the structure, there is dramatic contrast between prevailing views and our alternative curricula. For us, the structure of a discipline is a possible end point of educational experience. For the traditionalist, it is the beginning point. Bruner's [10] statement to the effect that anything worth teaching can be taught in some intellectually honest way at any level implies that the structure of what is taught is preformed by adults and unknown by children. Dewey, however, might well have argued that to begin with concrete experiences which arise out of social living is the most intellectually honest way of beginning with young children.

It should be clear that we are proposing that the primary and only legitimate source from which sequence emerges is the individual's developing interests and purposes, whether in the context of expanding social experiences or not. (We are not, however, espousing an "incidental curriculum." Most advocates of an incidental curriculum do not require a change in the traditional subject matter base; they

[10] Jerome S. Bruner. *Toward a Theory of Instruction.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1966.

emphasize instead a change in the manner and methods of interpreting and operating within the subject matter framework.)

Syntax. The syntax of the disciplines is their emphasis upon inquiry. Dewey, Kilpatrick, and others believed that problem solving was the basis of intellectual activity in relation to subject matter. Problem solving as a process was the activity that integrated child and subject matter.

Today, modes of inquiry are more commonly interpreted as highly specific processes or rules for relating to the subject matter under consideration. Although inquiry is defined as starting with a discrepancy or a curiosity and seems to suggest that the student will be exploring and investigating to satisfy his curiosity, in practice "modes of inquiry," as a process, has become a series of preset goals and activities which have to be followed in predetermined sequence *prior* to engaging in any independent inquiry.

Our orientation de-emphasizes the concern with disciplines and their syntax; we are concerned with facilitating the student's free experiencing of his environment in a playful, self-expressive way as an *initial* aspect of the learning process. This approach is called either "fooling around," by its critics, or "exploring ideas" by its supporters.

It is crucial to our point of view to clarify distinctions between personalized instruction and individualized instruction. Our moral concerns are grounded in a form of personalism in a social context. Our alternative model has no rationale for existence unless one sees another as a whole person. If there is no article of faith in the worth, dignity, integrity, and uniqueness of each person, then there is no need for an alternative model.

Yet even the concern for the individual

can be misleading. Our child development heritage is connected with the general growth of behavioristic psychology in many ways. When people speak of individual differences they often violate the concept of "the one," "the unity," and in some way fragment the individual. By manipulating psychological concepts and tools we have become adept at objectifying the inner substance of individuals and selecting out traits or characteristics to utilize in the manipulation of the person. It has even been suggested that we should strive to describe the inner qualities of individuals, relate these qualities to specific tasks, and process individuals through these tasks efficiently and effectively. Were we in fact able to do this, we would have a completely individualized yet predetermined and prescribed curriculum. What would look "open" on the surface would be completely closed for the individual.

In our proposed model, however, school must not only be committed to whole persons, but must be *functionally open* in the perceptions and actions of participants, not simply in the eyes of the observer. "Individualizing" or "personalizing" must deal with the whole person, his goals, his interests, and his perceptions, in interaction with the environment.

The meaning of "evaluation"

Different questions about evaluation must be raised when we reject the traditional assumption that schools should be purposeful in terms of predetermined intellectual and social ends. We are assuming that schools should be centers which provide a varied and supportive environment for expanding each student's awareness and inquiry in the context of his present life. We believe that such an aesthetic and intellectual approach to the present is

more desirable than attempting to shape human beings to some imagined future goal. Evaluation consistent with these assumptions takes place on two distinct but interrelated levels:

Level One: *Educational Evaluation* takes place within the school and is concerned primarily with the quality of the environment and students' (and teachers') development and learning.

Level Two: *Social Accountability* takes place primarily outside the school and is concerned with whether the school and individuals within the school are moving toward mutually agreed-upon directions and purposes.

Differentiating these two levels of evaluation may help to clarify the distinction between evaluation in schooling directed toward unpredictable and emerging goals and evaluation for social accountability.

Educational evaluation would be carried out by staff members and students. It would include self-evaluations by students, self-evaluations by teachers, and cooperative evaluations by staff and students. The focus of this evaluation process is twofold: (a) evaluation of the total educational environment, and (b) self-evaluations by students and teachers.

In evaluating the total educational environment we would ask broad evaluative questions concerning the variety, responsiveness, and quality of the educational setting: Does it support diversity? Is it liberating? Are there sufficient resources available? Does it promote self-direction and commitment? Does it function flexibly? How do individuals perceive the learning environment? The evidence for this evaluation should be obtained from observing and questioning teachers, students, and parents.

Examples of more specific questions are: Do students discuss their work with each other? Do they discover relationships among the things they are exploring? Is it possible for a student to pursue a viewpoint unpopular with the teacher? Do students give each other assistance? [11]

In accepting the values of diversity, self-direction, and commitment, we can no longer look to normative tests for evaluation of students. Standardized tests compare students with each other on the assumptions that there are common learnings and standards at each age level. Evaluation questions about student productions are also irrelevant when learning is viewed as a continuing process.

Self-evaluations should be carried out with the help of various members of the educational community and in terms of the emerging goals the student is dealing with at any point in time. Documentation in the form of diaries, logs, examples of work, and records of activities is useful for answering self-evaluative queries. The questions each person should be asking are ones such as: Am I moving in a direction I desire? Am I making progress in the "skills" I want to develop? Where do I want to go from here? Self-evaluation would necessarily be engaged in frequently as a basis for planning and revising learning activities.[12]

Social accountability in our model is based on two assumptions: first, that the school, as an institution that serves a particular community, is completely open and accessible to that community; and second, that processes

[11] For additional suggestions, see: Joseph Turner. *Making New Schools: The Liberation of Learning.* New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1971.

[12] See also: Alvin Hertzberg and Edward Stone. *Schools Are for Children: An American Approach to the Open Classroom.* New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1971.

have been mutually established for all concerned persons to consider together, negotiate differences, and arrive at agreed-upon general directions and purposes of schooling for that community. Some of the processes and opportunities that would have to be available to parents and other residents of the immediate community (and, to some extent, other interested educators) include:

1. Opportunities for participation in serious levels of decision making about overall directions and purposes
2. Opportunities for unrestricted observations of ongoing programs
3. Access to data gathered through in-school educational evaluation procedures.

The physical structure and setting

The physical setting could be viewed more as a learning and expressive center than as a "school." A materials center, including books and other media, would be an appropriate focus for our alternative model. Instead of organizing material by grade level, it would be more suitable to distinguish beginning, intermediate, and advanced materials. Students could explore and make use of whatever suits their interests and purposes.

Other area designations might be art workshops, media and communications workshops, science laboratories, nonstructured workrooms, small discussion rooms, larger meeting rooms.

Our model would maximize opportunities to select from a wide variety of activities. Areas may be designated for certain activities and the appropriate information, materials, and people could be found there. Opportunities and information should be organized in ways that facilitate awareness, access, and

selection. Some other possible area designations might be: (a) centers for inquiry in various fields related to broad themes and personal interests; (b) centers for communication and expression, for example, arts, humanities, and drama; (c) construction laboratory, for example, crafts, woodwork, and metal.

Our model requires maximum opportunity for open communication among participants. Information about resources should be easily located, and "consultants" would be available to help students locate or create new resources.

By allowing choice and encouraging self-direction in the pursuit of learning, this model brings into play the unique motivation of each learner. The teacher and other students are part of a responsive environment, bringing their real questions and feelings to the transactions which occur.

The community and "the school" should be highly interrelated. Students might participate in various activities in the larger community, and community members would be welcome to become part of in-school activities. Industry, commerce, arts, politics, and government are examples of areas in which opportunities for experiential learning can be found within the community.

DEVELOPMENTS

RECENT ATTEMPTS to implement alternative models of schooling reveal a greater emphasis on self-direction on the part of the student, and the development of various alternatives to traditional courses. The Milwaukee Independent School and the Berkeley Community High School are examples at the high school level. The Experimental College at the University of Minnesota, the Institute in Education

at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, and the University Without Walls have a similar emphasis at the college level.

Each of these innovative programs is different, and each exists in a different setting. However, all provide for more variety of options and more self-determination by the students than traditional schools allow. It seems to us that any of these examples of more open education could indeed become a model of the kind of education we are projecting if it were further developed to meet the criteria we are proposing. The problem with the current schools that have been moving in this direction is that they are pressured by the prevailing value system and its conception of education to fall back to traditional goals, techniques, and demands for standardized evaluation, and they have not clarified their basic orientation sufficiently to withstand these pressures.

Certainly it has been difficult in the face of the prevailing value emphases in our culture to move even as far as these schools have gone toward more open education. Nevertheless, a full commitment to the values and criteria of a humanistic ethic, as we have defined it, requires a more radical change than can be found in any of the structures presently provided for education. Undoubtedly, a number of different models will emerge to fit our conception. It is likely that such models will continue to be in a state of change. What they will have in common, however, is a clear commitment and continuing thrust toward expression of the humanistic ethic.

A vital aspect of the struggle for educational change in the direction we would like is the political requirement for survival. Supporters of change must deal with the legislatures and educational bureaucracies that push for increasing controls on teachers and learn-

ers and for establishing predetermined ends. To fight this entrenched power, supporters of more open models (parents, teachers, and children) must demand their right to alternative options and must band together to put forward their specific values and requirements for new educational opportunities for children. To this end, efforts to clarify the philosophical, social, and educational directions of an alternative model are a necessary and ongoing activity.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Creating an Alternate Conception of Education (Dimensions of Schooling)

Tyler Questions	Our Value Commitments =	Our Direction and Purposes		Cultural Means of Implementation
I What Educational Purposes?	Social and cultural values	1. Liberation 2. Pluralism 3. Participation	Realities of the cu tural milieu x)	e.g. 1. Political, economic, scientific structures 2. Aesthetic, metaphysical, technological rationales and expression 3. Communication media
	Ethical commitment (personal and group) (teachers and students)	1. Freedom 2. Choices 3. Decision making and action	Participation processes for creating new cultural meanings	1. Communication: reading, writing, computing, etc. 2. Work and leisure activities 3. Political and personal action
II What Educational Experiences?	Humanistic conception of learning	1. Exploring 2. Integrating 3. Transcending = creating personal meanings	Processes: experienced internally (not verifiable by observation)	e.g. 1. Exploring Probing Feeling and sensing

				2. Sorting out Restructuring Resolving paradoxes 3. Clarifying purposes Making commitments Evolving insights and generalizations
III What Organization?	People using time, space, and facilities alone and with others	1. Flexibility 2. Variety 3. Movement	Open "schools"	e.g. 1. Resource areas 2. Large and small spaces 3. The larger community
IV What Kind of Evaluation?	Evaluation of total educational environment, for example: Is it liberating? Does it support diversity? Does it function flexibly? Does it promote self-direction and commitment?	1. Diversity 2. Self-direction 3. Commitment	Educational evaluation (staff and students)	Unpredictable emerging goals 1. Self-evaluation by students 2. Self-evaluation by teachers 3. Cooperative evaluation by staff members and students
			Social accountability (parents and interested others)	Agreed-upon direction and purposes 1. Participation in decision re direction/purposes 2. Observation of programs 3. Access to educational evaluation data

APPENDIX B

Contrasting Models of Learning Denoting Alternate Conceptions of Education

Achieving Behavioral Objectives Model	School = An Environment Specifically Structured To Provide Opportunities for Learning		Humanistic-Existential Personal Model
1. Acquisition stage	Exploring variety of stimuli Assimilating new information Practicing skills	Exploring Messing around Mucking about Getting into things Trying out Feeling Probing Sensing	1. Exploring: expanding awareness

2. Transformation stage	Applying skills or principles in new situations	Sorting out Restructuring Filling in holes Reconciling sensed differences Resolving paradoxes	2. Integrating: presymbolic patterning
3. Evaluation	Checking whether the application of skills and concepts is adequate for a given task	Evolving insights and generalizations Discriminating Valuing Synthesizing Making commitments Clarifying purposes Expressing desires and fantasies	3. Transcending: creating personal meanings

APPENDIX C

Comparison of Criteria for Evaluating Educational Environments

Achieving Behavioral Objectives Model		Humanistic-Existential Personal Model	
1. Acquisition	Careful development and specification of public criteria as to what constitutes new information, and designation of an appropriate range of stimuli for grade levels or age groups in all subject fields. Determination of specific behavioral objectives. Teachers (sometimes students) may participate.	Does the structured environment provide each student with a variety of opportunities to explore; i.e., touch, dream, read, count, taste, think, sense, feel, tell, yell, smell? What should be added? What is superfluous? Do students have opportunities to interact with one another; with adults; be alone?	1. Exploring: expanding awareness

2. Transformation	External structuring provided for student; directs his focusing on predetermined range of stimuli; delimits range of information to be manipulated.	Does the learning environment facilitate attempts of students and teachers at structuring and patterning by providing these opportunities and services: consulting; interacting; challenging; sharing; confronting; accepting; clarifying; caring?	2. Integrating: presymbolic patterning
3. Evaluation	Teacher-made tests; or standardized tests; or textbook questions; may be essay and/or objective items, designed to ascertain whether predetermined (behavioral) objectives have been achieved. Student may be permitted to participate in evaluating progress and in setting new goals.	Does each student and teacher assume responsibility for evaluating his progress and setting new goals? Philosophical criteria rather than societal criteria of judgment. The only acceptable criteria are humanistic values for individuals and groups.	3. Transcending: creating personal meanings